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Workers, flexibility help Honda survive, thrive in changing auto industry

Honda is "a people company" whose success is keyed by "developing and empowering our people to make the most of their talents," the president and CEO of Honda of America Manufacturing said Nov. 13 at an Asian Studies Forum on campus.

And in Ohio, Honda of America's roughly 13,000 "associates" help provide the flexibility that is, in turn, "key to survival in the auto industry," Koki Hirashima told more than 300 listeners in the Bowen-Thompson Student Union during his daylong visit to BGSU.

Citing an example, Hirashima related that when Honda launched its new Accord last year, the company took the opportunity to update its Marysville auto plant to the new global standard layout for assembly lines—a change that required lengthening the lines by 400 feet.

"We completed extending the lines by moving several departments and conveyor systems during the holiday shutdown almost two years ago," he said. "It was risky because we needed to be at mass production as soon as the holiday was over. Thousands of production associates depended on it.

"But the Honda associates involved in the project gave up much of their time off to meet this challenge. And on Jan. 2, we were operating at full capacity—without missing a beat."

Workers were willing to sacrifice time off in part "because they were excited by this big challenge," Hirashima added. "But they also recognize that the competition in the auto industry is very difficult. In order to satisfy our customers, we have to be more flexible and more efficient."

Honda and Ohio

The Marysville auto plant opened in 1982, three years after Honda began building motorcycles at its first Ohio plant, also in Marysville. Honda of America Manufacturing associates now work at five major Ohio plants, and over the last few years, BGSU has ranked among the top 10 institutions in terms of new Honda hires, and second in the company's Purchasing Department.

Accompanying the Honda executive were several BGSU graduates now employed by the automaker. After Hirashima's talk, they participated in a question-and-answer session with the audience.

Hirashima listed available land, a good transportation system and cooperation from the state and local governments as factors in the decision to locate in Ohio. But those weren't the only reasons.

"In Ohio, we found strong values, a good work ethic and an understanding of what it means to work together as a team," said Hirashima, leader of manufacturing and engineering for all of Honda's North American operations. "In short, our sense was that the people of Ohio would make very good associates."

"What we didn't know then was how well our associates would understand and embrace Honda's commitment to customer satisfaction," he acknowledged, calling his company and Ohio "a good fit for nearly 25 years."

Corporate culture

Hirashima pointed out that every worker at a Honda plant wears the same white uniform, and there are no special parking spaces for executives. "We also have no offices—my

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desk is surrounded by the desks of many other associates," he noted.

"Within Honda, what matters is your knowledge, not your rank," he added, and that knowledge, even in new associates, is put to use through responsibility for project management. This involvement by workers at all levels requires what the company calls a "challenging spirit"—"willingness to accept change but also to seek out new challenges on your own," he explained.

"Seeking challenges, such as becoming the first company in the world to introduce a fuel cell vehicle to the market, is the foundation upon which our company is built," he said.

The decision to establish manufacturing operations in the U.S. was such a challenge for Honda, which began making its Accord in Marysville in 1982.

"At the time, Honda was criticized for having Japanese engineers in Ohio," Hirashima recalled. "Some people thought we were not providing opportunities to Americans. In fact, our goal was quite the opposite. We wanted to fully transfer our corporate culture by combining it with local values to create a strong Honda operation."

"Through this process, we have advanced our operations in Ohio. Further, what we have learned in Ohio has been applied to Honda's way of doing business globally."

"Today, building cars in America seems like an easy decision," added Hirashima, whose company also has more than 150 parts suppliers in Ohio, including 15 in northwest Ohio.

"Other international automakers followed us by building plants in America. And the Big 3 have started to focus on quality and productivity," he noted. "By any measure, the quality and productivity of the entire industry has improved since we began building cars in Ohio."

Training is ongoing

For students interested in entering the auto industry, he cautioned that their training won't end when their formal education does.

The first requirement is "courage to throw yourself into an unusual and different environment. And then learn something from it," Hirashima said.

"But I hope you understand that even after you graduate, you are still in the learning stage. Only by learning different approaches can you grow your own capabilities. Only by learning new things can you work together with others as part of a team. And feel the joy of success."

Ray and Pat Browne honored along with BGSU authors and artists

Fifty-seven BGSU faculty and staff authors, artists and composers were recognized for their accomplishments at the annual Authors and Artists Reception, hosted by the Friends of the University Libraries on Nov. 12 in Jerome Library.

Also presented was the Friend of the Library Award, which was given to Ray and Pat Browne for their contributions to the Popular Culture Library.

The program also included a dedication of the Popular Culture Library as the Ray and Pat Browne Library for Popular Culture Studies. The BGSU Board of Trustees on Oct. 3 officially renamed the library in honor of the couple, who played an instrumental role in its creation and growth.

In presenting the Friends award to the Brownes, library Dean Lorraine Haricombe said, "From the beginning, the Brownes, along with Bill Schurk, were instrumental in building a collection of materials to study the American way of life as an academic discipline. Since the founding of the Popular Culture Library (PCL) in 1969, the Brownes, together with a large network of donors, have continued to supply the PCL with a wealth of materials."

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"Today, the Popular Culture Library is nationally and internationally acclaimed as one of the most prestigious collections of its kind with materials ranging from the late 19th century to the present time. In 1986, the Ray and Pat Browne Popular Culture Research Collections were dedicated to pay tribute to the Brownes' steadfast support over a period of 20 years.

"The Brownes' continued commitment to the PCL is reflected in the recent establishment of the Ray and Pat Browne Endowment Fund for the Popular Culture Library. The purpose of the fund is to advance the field of popular culture literature at Bowling Green State University and beyond.

"For more than three decades the Popular Culture Library has benefited from the Brownes' vision and enthusiasm to acquire popular culture materials, their advocacy for scholarship in popular culture, and now their investment through the Ray and Pat Browne Endowment Fund for the BGSU PCL to ensure the growth of the popular culture collections and intellectual access to materials in the collections."

Ray Browne, Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of Popular Culture, was a founder of both the collection and the Department of Popular Culture at BGSU, and his wife Pat, is the former editor of the Bowling Green Popular Press. Both are now retired from the University.

The Friends Award is an external award granted annually to honor a faculty or staff member, student, community member or institution for substantial contributions to the growth and development of the University Libraries.

Keeley, Browne tailor 'Asking the Right Questions' to law

M. Neil Browne, Distinguished Teaching Professor of economics, and Stuart Keeley, Distinguished Teaching Professor of psychology, have taken the art of critical thinking and applied it to law in their new book, *Asking the Right Questions about the Legal Environment of Business: A Guide to Critical Thinking*, published by Prentice Hall.

Using research from their previously published *Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking*, Keeley and Browne tailored the material to the law classroom and legal reasoning. The book is fact-centered and observation based, according to Browne, and is much more analytical than its parent book.

"Law is concerned with specifics, facts and analogies, and in the book we had to reduce the elements that were not useful in a law classroom," Browne said. "The book is much more analytical because the process of selecting analogies is important in law."

Although Browne and Keeley agreed to write the book at the request of the publisher, they do not plan on tailoring it to other disciplines.

Currently they are working with Wanda Overland, dean of students, on a book tentatively titled *A Is for Asking: Questions for Student Success*. It is targeted to the orientation and first-year-students market.

"The first year of college is where habits are formed," Browne said. "We are committed to making a contribution to improving the learning abilities of first-year students."

Munson to lead Ohio Choral Directors Association

Mark Munson, music education, has been chosen president-elect of the Ohio Choral Directors Association.

He will serve a two-year term as president-elect of the OCDA, followed by two years as

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president and two years as vice president.

The OCDA is a state chapter within the Central Division of the American Choral Directors Association. A non-profit music-education organization, the ACDA was founded in 1959 to promote excellence in choral music through performance composition, publication, research and teaching.

Currently in his 14th year on the Bowling Green faculty, Munson directs the University Women's Chorus and the Collegiate Chorale. He holds degrees from the University of Cincinnati, the University of Michigan and Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Choirs under his direction have toured in both the United States and Europe. He has presented sessions at many conferences, including the 1996 and 2002 national meetings of the Music Educators National Conference.

Campus to celebrate 4th annual International Education Week

Bowling Green will join with colleges and universities across the nation in celebrating International Education Week, Nov. 17-21.

The fourth annual week brings a variety of lectures, displays and entertainment to BGSU's campus. The Center for International Programs, the Education Abroad Program and various departments are sponsoring each of the events.

The celebration starts Monday (Nov. 17) at 7 p.m. when Frank Goza, sociology, will discuss "Demography and International Studies" in 206 Bowen-Thompson Student Union.

Education Abroad will have a display on the first floor of the union from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday (Nov. 18). Students can learn and gather information about studying abroad.

Tuesday evening brings a "Cup of Culture—Bulgaria and Russia" in the Smith Multicultural Lounge (222) Union. The lecture begins at 8 p.m. and is sponsored by the World Student Association.

The St. Petersburg Quartet will be featured in two concerts on Wednesday (Nov. 19). The first, sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Musical Arts, will begin at 12:30 p.m. in the Multi-purpose Room (228) Union. A second performance, sponsored by the College of Musical Arts, will be held at 8 p.m. in the Bryan Recital Hall of the Moore Musical Arts Center.

On Thursday (Nov. 20), an International Forum will feature readings by Lucas Cejpek and Margret Kreidl, writers from Vienna, Austria. The event begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Mylander Room (207) Union and is sponsored by the German, Russian and East Asian languages department.

Nov. 21, the final day of International Education Week, features a performance of "Fiddler on the Roof" at 8 p.m. in the Eva Marie Saint Theatre, located on the second floor of University Hall. Tickets can be reserved by calling 2-2719. The event is sponsored by the Department of Theatre and Film. ("Fiddler" will also be performed on Nov. 22 and 23; see calendar for information.)

The annual observance of International Education Week began in 2000 as part of President Clinton's international education policy. Research by the American Council on Education, the Institute of International Education and the Chronicle of Higher Education shows that a high percentage of college freshmen consider "improving my understanding of other countries and cultures" as essential or very important to their undergraduate education.

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IN BRIEF

University states Severe Weather Policy

The first flurries have flown, reminding us that winter is upon us. Following is the University's policy regarding severe weather:

The severe weather policy says that any decision to close the University will be communicated by the Office of Marketing and Communications, which will notify Fact Line (2-2445), WBGU-FM (88.1), WFAL-AM (1610), WFOB, WLQR, WCWA, WLQR-FM, WRQN-FM and WFIN. In addition, WBGU-TV (Channel 27) and three Toledo television stations (channels 11, 13 and 24) will be notified.

Every effort will be made to notify these media by 6:30 a.m. on the day of closing. Marketing and Communications will also send a general email to all campus offices whenever a decision to close is made.

Whenever a severe weather emergency occurs, there is some confusion regarding radio/television announcements. Employees should confirm the announcement by listening to more than one radio/TV station, or by directing questions to a University answering service number (2-SNOW).

The University closes only in times of emergency. If weather or other conditions warrant limiting University activities, a decision will be made either to operate classes and offices or close them both. If closure is determined, only designated emergency employees are expected to report to work.

For the full policy, visit the respective links for each constituent group.

For classified staff the handbook link is: www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/handbooks/swclopolicy12021.PDF

For administrative staff the handbook link is: www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/handbooks/admin_hand.pdf and then click Appendix E.

Faculty will find guidance regarding student attendance during weather situations at: www.bgsu.edu/downloads/file919.pdf.

Public skate to benefit the hungry

The BGSU Ice Arena will host a Food Drive Public Skating Session from 3:30-5:30 p.m. on Nov. 23. Admission and skate rental are free with a canned food donation that will benefit the Bowling Green Christian Food Pantry.

For more information on this event and other BGSU Ice Arena special events, call 2-2264.

CALENDAR

Monday, Nov. 17

CFDR Speaker Series, "Can Covenant Marriage Foster Marital Stability Among Low-Income, Fragile Newtlyweds?" by Laura Sanchez, Steven Nock, Jill Deines, sociology, 10 a.m., 314 Union.

International Studies Lecture Series, "Demography and International Studies," by Franklin Goza, sociology, 7:30 p.m., 206 Union.

Tuesday, Nov. 18

Jazz Lab Band II, directed by Brian DiBlassio, 8 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Movie, "S.W.A.T.," 9:30 p.m., Union Theater. Sponsored by Bowen-Thompson Student Union Programs.

Wednesday, Nov. 19

Classified Staff Council, 9 a.m., 316 Union.

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Brown Bag Lunch, "What Geology Reveals," by Jane Forsyth, geology, noon, Women's Center, 107 Hanna Hall.
Arts and Sciences Forum with the St. Petersburg String Quartet, 12:30 p.m., 228 Union.
Concert by the St. Petersburg String Quartet, 8 p.m., Bryan Recital Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Thursday, Nov. 20

Partnership Presentation, "Mentors at Work," by Marlene Ellis, Ohio State University Extension, and Judy Kiser, social work, noon, 318 Union. Sponsored by PCA and CITE.

Men's Issues Brown Bag Series, "Turn Your Head and Cough: Exploring Men's Attitudes toward Their Health," noon, Counseling Center, 320 Saddlemere Student Services Building. For more information, call 2-2081.

Grant Clean-Up Workshop, noon, 201 Union. Sponsored by PCA and CITE.

GREAL International Forum Presentation, readings by Lucas Cejpek and Margret Kreidl, Austrian writers in residence, 7:30 p.m., 207 Union.

Jazz Lab Band I, directed by Jeff Halsey, 8 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Friday, Nov. 21

Economics Colloquium Series, "Causation in Hume's Political Economy," with Eric Schliesser, Washington University, 3:30 p.m., 4000 Business Administration Building.

Mathematics and Statistics Colloquium, "Modeling Effects of Agent Combinations Using Nonlinear Mixture Experiment Models," with Don White, University of Toledo, 4 p.m., 459 Mathematical Sciences Building. Call 2-7473 for more information.

Musicians Guild Concert, 7 p.m., 228 Union.

Collegiate Chorale and Masterworks Chorale, 8 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Movie, "S.W.A.T.," 11 p.m., Union Theater. Sponsored by Bowen-Thompson Student Union Programs.

Saturday, Nov. 22

Concert Band and University Band, 8 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Sunday, Nov. 23

Wind Ensemble, directed by Bruce Moss, 4 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

A Cappella Choir and Early Music Ensemble, 7 p.m., St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 315 S. College Drive.

Movie, "S.W.A.T.," 9:30 p.m., Union Theater. Sponsored by Bowen-Thompson Student Union Programs.

Continuing Events

Nov. 15-Dec. 14

Art Exhibit, "Revelations and Reflections of American Self-Taught Artists," Willard Wankelman Gallery, Fine Arts Center. Gallery hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday and 1-4 p.m. Sundays.

Nov. 21-23

Theatre Production, "Fiddler on the Roof," book by Joseph Stein, music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, 8 p.m. Nov. 21 and 22, 2 p.m. Nov. 23, Eva Marie Saint Theatre, University Hall. Admission is \$10 for adults/students/senior citizens, and \$5 for children under 12. For tickets, call 2-2719.

Nov. 22-Jan. 18

54th annual Faculty/Staff Art Exhibition, featuring a special tribute to the art of Tracy Ruhlin (1957-2003), Dorothy Uber Bryan Gallery, Fine Arts Center. Gallery hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday and 1-4 p.m. Sundays.

Nov. 24-Dec. 10

Art Exhibit, student prints exhibition, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily, Little Gallery, BGSU Firelands.

Through Nov. 25

Planetarium Presentation, "Centuries! Ohio's Story from Earth to Space," showings at 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays, 7:30 p.m. Sundays and 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 22. \$1 donation suggested.

Key: CFDR-Center for Family and Demographic Research; CITE-Center for Innovative and Transformative Education; GREAL-Department of German, Russian and East Asian Languages; PCA-Partnerships for Community Action.

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FACULTY

There were no job postings this week.

Please contact the Office of Human Resources at 419-372-8421 for information regarding classified and administrative positions. Position vacancy announcements may be viewed by visiting the HR Web site at www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr.

Employees wishing to apply for these positions must sign a "Request for Transfer" form and attach an updated resume or data sheet. This information must be turned in to Human Resources by the job deadline.

CLASSIFIED

Secretary 1 (C-54-Vd)—Psychology. Pay grade 6. Nine-month, full-time position. Deadline: 1 p.m. Friday, Nov. 21.

The following position is advertised on and off campus:

Radio Dispatcher (C-51-Vd)—Public Safety (collective bargaining unit position).

Pay is \$12.28 per hour. Twelve-month, part-time.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Accountant (V-075)—Business Office.

Administrative grade 15. Deadline: Dec. 1.

Financial Aid Web and Server Applications Manager (V-074)—Student Financial Aid. Administrative grade 14. Deadline: Dec. 1.

Director of Gift Planning (V-048)—Office of Development, University Advancement. Administrative grade 18. All applicants will receive full and fair consideration until the position is filled.

Major Gift Officer (V-068)—Office of Development, University Advancement. Administrative grade 15. Review of applications will continue until the position is filled.
WBGU Major Gift Officer (R-071)—Tucker Center for Telecommunications. Administrative grade 15. Review of applications will continue until the position is filled.

OBITUARIES

Gwendolyn Loughheed, 88, died Oct. 31 in Bowling Green. She was an instructor in the English department at BGSU during the 1960s.